COWBOY COMICS No. 59

BUCK JONES

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BUCK JONES AND THE KING of the RIO!

IN THE GREAT PALACE 'KING' VIGO RECEIVES HIS SUBJECTS - - -
THE GOVERMENT FEARS ME- - AND YOU, MY GOOD FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. THEY SEND TROOPS, WHO SIT DOWN OUTSIDE OUR RAMPART OF HILLS AND DARE NOT ATTACK! THEY SURROUND US ON THREE SIDES - - BUT THERE IS ANOTHER SIDE- - THE RIO GRANDE - - THE GREAT RIVER!

ACROSS THE RIO GRANDE ARE RICH LANDS WHICH ONCE BELONGED TO OUR PEOPLE - - THE LANDS THE AMERICANOS NOW CALL TEXAS, ARIZONA, NEW MEXICO, CALIFORNIA! MY ARMY SHALL ADVANCE ACROSS THE RIO GRANDE AND TAKE THESE LANDS!

I SHALL BE KING OF ALL THE LANDS BORDERING THE RIO GRANDE - - - AND THE SPOILS OF WAR SHALL BE YOURS!

GOVERNMENT TROOPS GUARD THE PASSES TO THE SOUTH- - -

- - BUT KING VIGO'S ARMY MARCHES NORTH TO THE RIO GRANDE- - -

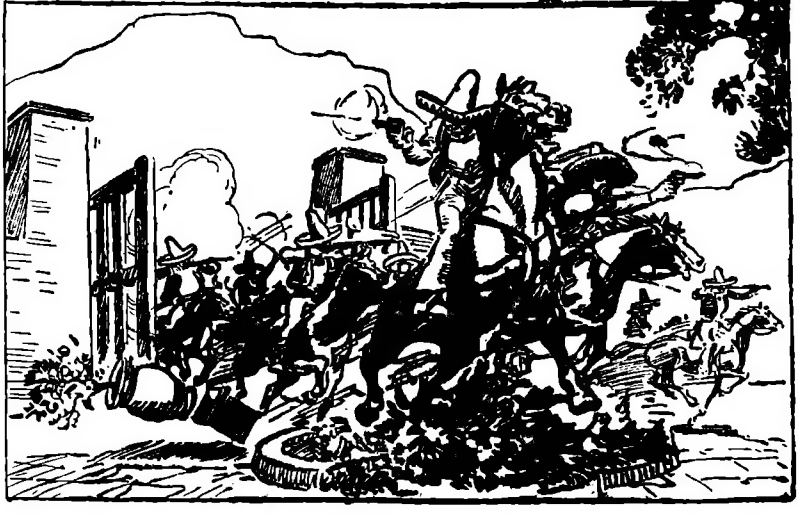
VIVA VIGO! WE SHALL BE RICH IN CATTLE AND LAND!

IF ALL ELSE FAILS, I WILL CAUSE SUCH TROUBLE BETWEEN OUR GOVERNMENT AND THE GRINGOES THAT MY REBELLION WILL SPREAD AND I WILL BE KING OF MY OWN LAND

FIRED BY VIGO'S CRAZY DREAM OF POWER THE GREAT COLUMN SPLASHES ACROSS THE RIO GRANDE AT A LONELY SPOT IN THE BADLANDS. IT CROSSES INTO GRINGO TERRITORY-- INTO THE FRINGES OF CHAPARRAL COUNTY--WHERE BUCK JONES IS SHERIFF AND UPHOLDER OF LAW AND ORDER - -
AND FIRST TO FEEL THE ONSLAUGHT OF VIGO'S BANDIT ARMY IS A LONELY RANCH - - -
SEE, AMIGOS! A RANCHO - - A HACIENDA - - - BUILT BY OUR ANCESTORS TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO. THE GRINGOS HAVE IT, BUT IT SHOULD BE OURS! WE SHALL TAKE IT BACK!
WITHOUT WARNING THE ATTACKERS COME IN - -
BANDITS! AND THEY MEAN BUSINESS! GET THE BOYS TOGETHER, HANK!
BY HECK! GREASERS!

SOME OF THE HANDS TRAPPED IN THE BUNKHOUSE OUTSIDE THE HACIENDA WALLS, FIGHT BACK - - -

WHILE THE RANCHER AND HIS MEN RETREAT TO THE RANCH-HOUSE, KING VIGO'S CAVALRY STREAMS THROUGH THE GATEWAY - - -



RECKLESSLY THEY RIDE TO THE VERY WALLS OF THE HACIENDA - - -

AND AS HIS MEN OVERWHELM THE RANCH, KING VIGO SMILES - - -

SOON THE RANCH IS A SMOKING RUIN - -

THE BANDIT ARMY DRIVES INTO THE HILLS TO MAKE CAMP WHILE KING VIGO PLANS HIS NEXT MOVE - - -
AND BARELY AN HOUR LATER A LONE DESERT RAT RECIEVES A SHOCK AS HE RIDES TO THE RANCH FOR A MEAL - - -
GOSHDURN! I AIN'T NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT! GREASERS, BY THE LOOKS OF IT! BY HECK, I'D BETTER RIDE TO ALKALI CITY AND WARN THE SHERIFF!
LATER, IN BUCK JONES' OFFICE IN ALKALI CITY - - -
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT, DAN!
THE RANCHO DEL RAY'S WRECKED, BUCK - - AND EVERY MANJACK WIPED OUT! I TELL YE IT WAS LIKE ONE OF THE OLD REDSKIN MASSACRES - - OR LIKE AN ARMY HAD RID OVER IT!

JOHN CARY WAS A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE! THOSE GREASER BANDITS'LL PAY FOR THIS IF I HAVE TO TRAIL 'EM HALF ACROSS MEXICO!

IN THE BLAZING HEAT OF THE AFTERNOON BUCK RIDES TO THE RUINED RANCH AND HIS INVESTIGATIONS CONFIRM WHAT OLD DAN HAS TOLD HIM. HE RIDES ON THE TRAIL OF THE BANDIT ARMY, AND THE TRAIL IS EASY TO FOLLOW UP INTO THE HILLS - - -
I' THINK I'D BETTER SCOUT A BIT TO FIND OUT WHETHER THEY'VE SKULKED BACK ACROSS THE RIO GRANDE - - - OR WHETHER THEY MEAN TO STRIKE AGAIN!

THEN AFTER RIDING FOR HOURS UP INTO THE HILLS BUCK COMES ACROSS THE BANDITS CAMP.
BY CRIKEY! LOOKS LIKE DAN WAS RIGHT! THAT SURE IS AN ARMY DOWN THERE!

BUCK STANDS AMAZED ABOVE THE GREAT CAMP- - -

STAY HERE, SILVER, WHILE I GET A BIT CLOSER TO FIND OUT WHAT THIS MOB AIMS TO DO.

SOON BUCK FINDS HIMSELF LOOKING DOWN ON KING VIGO HIMSELF- - -

JUMPING COYOTES, THAT LOOKS LIKE THE BOSS OF THIS OUTFIT!

BEE, AMIGOS, THE NEAREST TOWN IS CALLED ALKALI CITY. IT IS A SMALL TOWN, AND VERY ISOLATED. THERE WE SHALL STRIKE OUR NEXT BLOW- - AT DAWN!

ALKALI CITY, HUH? BY HECK, I'D BETTER VAMOOSE AND WARN THE FOLKS TO BE READY FOR THIS MOB! GOOD JOB I UNDERSTAND THEIR LINGO!

BUT SUDDENLY- -
A GRINGO SPY!

BUCK HAS TO THINK FAST AND MOVE FASTER. HE LEAPS OVER THE ROCKS- - -
NO TIME TO GET BACK TO SILVER!

- - AND MAKES STRAIGHT FOR THE SUPPLY WAGON - - -
TAKE THAT, GREASER! AND I'M TAKIN' YOUR WAGON!
AAAAGH!

BUCK LEAPS TO THE WAGON SEAT AND WHIPS UP THE STARTLED TEAM AS REVOLVERS ROAR - - -

LUCKILY KING VIGO'S BIVOUAC IS ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CAMP AND BUCK GETS A CLEAR START- - -

GLANCING BACK, BUCK SEES THE BRIGANDS GETTING CLOSER AND CLOSER —

SILVER, TOO, SEES THE CHASE AND RACES TO FOLLOW HIS MASTER - -

BUCKS BORROWED TEAM BEGINS TO FLAG AS THE MEXICAN RIDERS OVERTAKE HIM - - -

RECKLESSLY BUCK SWINGS THE WAGON OFF THE TRAIL - - -

BUT AS SILVER WAITS FOR HIS MASTER - - -
SUDDENLY - -
HECK, HERE COMES THE SMASH-UP!

AS THE WAGON GOES OVER WITH A MIGHTY CRASH, BUCK LANDS IN SILVER'S SADDLE - - -

AND BUCK KEEPS ON MOVING FAST UNTIL, WELL AFTER SUNDOWN, HE DASHES INTO ALKALI CITY - - -

WORD FLIES ROUND THE TOWN - - -

ARMED MEN HURRY TO BUCKS OFFICE FOR ORDERS - - -

BUCK COMPLETES HIS PLANS FOR THE DEFENCE OF ALKALI CITY AND THROUGHOUT THE REMAINING HOURS OF NIGHT ARMED MEN WATCH TENSELY FOR THE FIRST SIGN OF THE INVADING BANDIT ARMY - - -

SURE, BUCK! WE'LL GIVE THOSE VARMINTS A SMACK THEY WON'T FORGET!

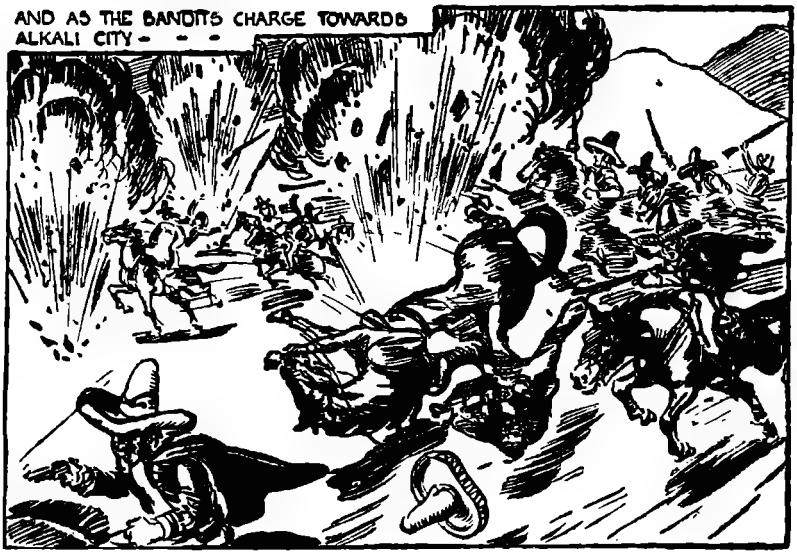
OKAY, TOM?

AND AT SUN-UP KING VIGO'S ARMY APPROACHES ALKALI CITY - - -

WHAT OF THE GRINGO SPY? DO YOU NOT THINK HE HAS WARNED THESE PEOPLE?

PAH, HE WAS BUT A CHANCE RIDER. IF HE DOES NOT SPEAK OUR TONGUE HE WOULD NOT HAVE UNDERSTOOD WHAT I SAID ANYWAY. DO NOT WORRY, AMIGO! WE SHALL TAKE THEM BY SURPRISE AS THEY SLEEP!

BUT AS THE DAWN LIGHT STRENGTHENS, THE WHOLE OF ALKALI CITY IS ALERT AND BUCK JONES GRINS AS HE PREPARES TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE IN HIS DEFENCE PLAN - - -
GUESS THIS'LL UPSET 'EM! THEY DIDN'T KNOW WE'VE LAID DYNAMITE CHARGES DURING THE NIGHT!


AND AS THE BANDITS CHARGE TOWARDS ALKALI CITY - - -

WHAT IS THIS? TAKE COVER! MEN KEEP FIRING, YOU OTHERS WORK ROUND TO ATTACK UNDER COVER OF THE SHOOTING!

SCORES OF RIFLES SEND A HAIL OF LEAD SMASHING INTO THE BUILDINGS OF THE TOWN - - -

AS THE BULLETS WHINE INTO THE TOWN, MEN ARE HIT - - -
THE COYOTES! LOOK AFTER JED, LADIES!

A BAND OF HORSEMEN RIDE WARILY ROUND READY TO ATTACK FROM ANOTHER DIRECTION - - -

BUT BUCK IS READY FOR SUCH A MOVE - - -

GET READY TO SHOVE IT OFF, BOYS!

THAR SHE GOES, BUCK!

THEY WON'T KNOW WHAT'S HIT 'EM WHEN THIS LOT GOES UP!

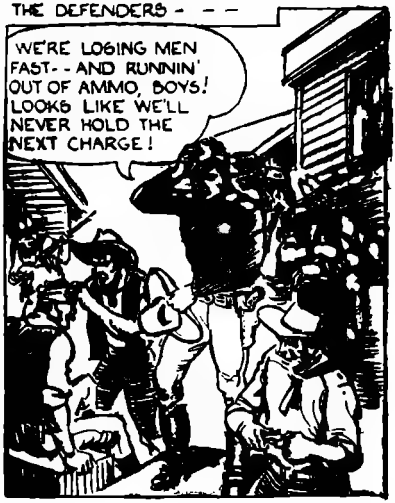
AND AS THE MEXICANS CLIMB OUT OF THE GULLY, READY TO CHARGE, THE DYNAMITE WAGON RUSHES DOWN TOWARDS THEM - - -

AS MEN AND HORSES SCRAMBLE BACK INTO THE GULLY AGAIN - - -

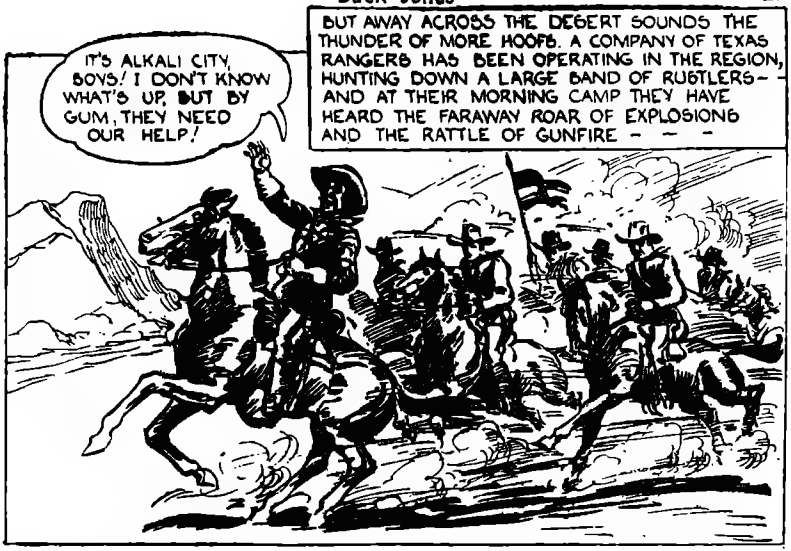
AND SUDDENLY - - -

BUCK'S DYNAMITE DODGE HAS SHAKEN THE BANDITS AND THINNED THEIR RANKS, BUT VIGO GIVES THE ORDER AND RECKLESSLY ANOTHER PARTY CHARGES TO THE VERY WALLS OF ALKALI CITY - - -

AGAIN THE ATTACK IS DRIVEN OFF - - BUT SHEER NUMBERS ARE AGAINST THE DEFENDERS - - -



AND IN COMES THE NEXT ATTACK, WITH KING VIGO HIMSELF IN THE LEAD - - -


IT'S ALKALI CITY, BOYS! I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S UP, BUT BY GUM, THEY NEED OUR HELP!
BUT AWAY ACROSS THE DESERT SOUNDS THE THUNDER OF MORE HOOFS. A COMPANY OF TEXAS RANGERS HAS BEEN OPERATING IN THE REGION, HUNTING DOWN A LARGE BAND OF RUSTLERS-- AND AT THEIR MORNING CAMP THEY HAVE HEARD THE FARAWAY ROAR OF EXPLOSIONS AND THE RATTLE OF GUNFIRE - - -

BACK IN ALKALI CITY THE BANDITS BREAK THROUGH THE BARRICADES AND STORM DOWN THE MAIN STREET - - -

THEN BUCK SEES LOPE VIGO - -
I'LL GET YOU, HOMBRE, IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO!

AH, YOU - - THE SPYING GRINGO!

BUCK HITS KING VIGO - - HARD - - -

STOP RIGHT THERE, COYOTE. IF I GET A CHANCE I'LL BE PUTTING YOU UP FOR TRIAL!

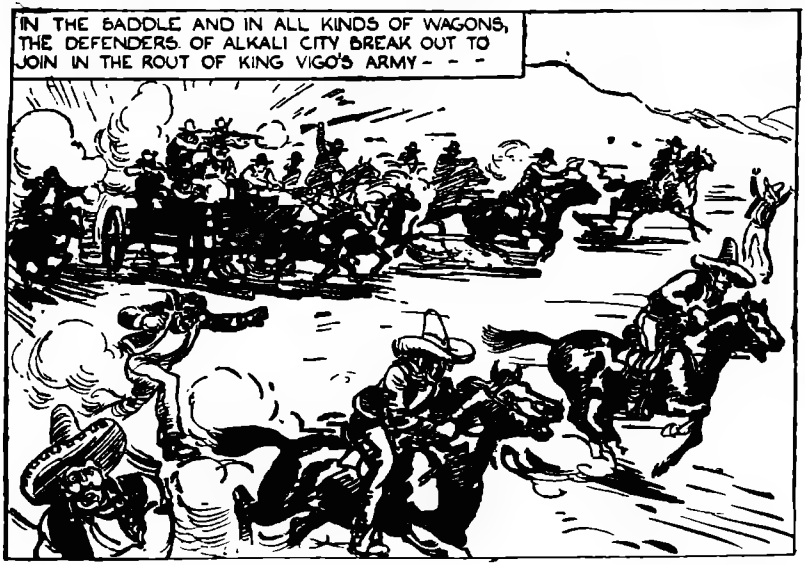
BUCK BELIEVES HE WILL NEVER HAVE A CHANCE TO BRING THE BANDIT KING TO TRIAL - - - BUT UNKNOWN TO THE SHERIFF AND UNHEARD IN THE DIN OF FIGHTING - - - HELP ARRIVES AS THE TROOP OF RANGERS STORM INTO THE TOWN - - -

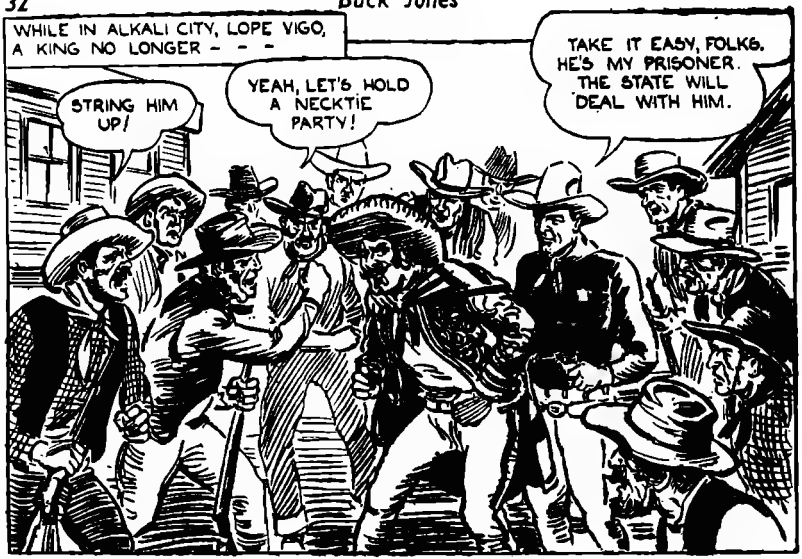
GRINGO TROOPS! THEY HAVE SENT THEIR ARMY AGAINST US!

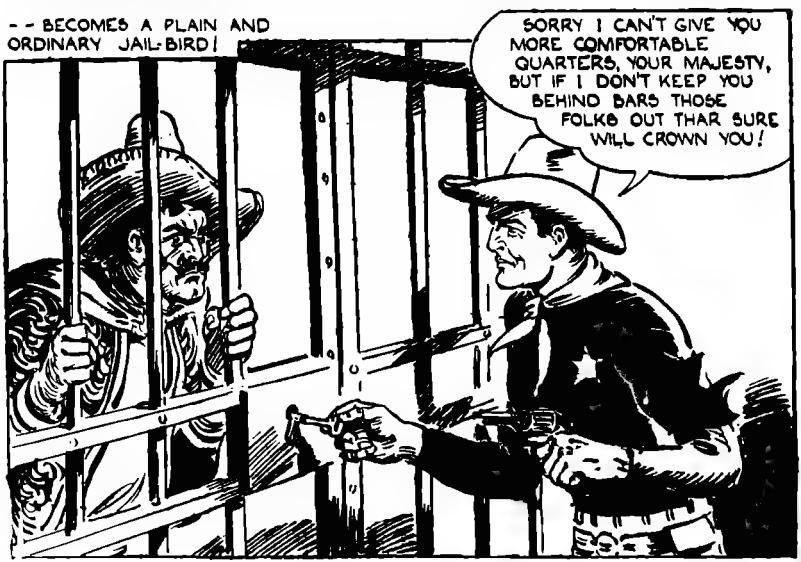
SEEING THE TEXAS RANGERS, KING VIGO'S ARMY BREAKS IN PANIC AND STREAMS AWAY ACROSS THE PLAIN-

COME ON, MEN, WE'VE GOT 'EM ON THE RUN! WE'LL CHASE 'EM CLEAR TO THE RIO GRANDE AND GIVE 'EM A LESSON THEY'LL NEVER FORGET!

IT'S THE TEXAS RANGERS! THEY'VE SAVED US!
NOW'S YOUR CHANCE, BOYS, TO TO KEEP THOSE GREASERS ON THE RUN!

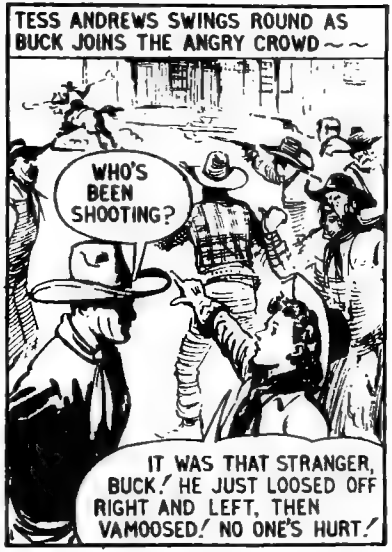

IN THE SADDLE AND IN ALL KINDS OF WAGONS, THE DEFENDERS OF ALKALI CITY BREAK OUT TO JOIN IN THE ROUT OF KING VIGO'S ARMY - - -


WHILE IN ALKALI CITY, LOPE VIGO, A KING NO LONGER - - -
STRING HIM UP!
YEAH, LET'S HOLD A NECKTIE PARTY!
TAKE IT EASY, FOLKS. HE'S MY PRISONER. THE STATE WILL DEAL WITH HIM.


- - BECOMES A PLAIN AND ORDINARY JAIL-BIRD!
SORRY I CAN'T GIVE YOU MORE COMFORTABLE QUARTERS, YOUR MAJESTY, BUT IF I DON'T KEEP YOU BEHIND BARS THOSE FOLKS OUT THAR SURE WILL CROWN YOU!

BUCK JONES *and the* ROOKIE RANGER

BUCK LEAPS TO THE DOOR OF HIS OFFICE LIKE A FLASH ~~
GUNPLAY! THIS IS WHERE I STEP IN!


TESS ANDREWS SWINGS ROUND AS BUCK JOINS THE ANGRY CROWD ~~
WHO'S BEEN SHOOTING?
IT WAS THAT STRANGER, BUCK! HE JUST LOOSED OFF RIGHT AND LEFT, THEN VAMOOSED! NO ONE'S HURT!

HE MUST HAVE BEEN UP TO *SOMETHING!* A GUY DOESN'T CAUSE A HULLABALLOO LIKE THAT FOR NO REASON AT ALL~~
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT, BUCK, BUT THERE WAS NO HOLD-UP OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT~~

THEN FROM UP THE STREET COMES A MIGHTY BLAST AS BUCK'S JAILHOUSE GOES SKY-HIGH!
BUCK! IT'S THE JAIL!
THERE MUST HAVE BEEN ANOTHER OF THEM!

I GET IT NOW! IT WAS A PLOT TO GET ME OUT OF THE WAY WHILE SOMEONE BLASTED THE JAIL! MUST BE SOME OF TEX SNYDER'S GANG, SPRINGING HIM FROM JAIL!

MEANWHILE, BEHIND THE WRECKED JAILHOUSE, TEX SNYDER, THE TEXAS KILLER, STUMBLES OUT OVER THE DEBRIS~
COME ON, TEX! HURRY! BEFORE THAT DOGGONE SHERIFF GETS BACK!
NICE WORK, FRED! YOU AND SMOKEY SURE PUT ONE OVER ON THEM!

YUP! AND HE SHOULD BE WAITING FOR US NOW!
O.K! LET'S GO!

AS THE CROOKS TEAR AWAY AT TOP SPEED, BUCK RACES UP THE STEPS OF THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE, GUN IN HAND ~
I GUESS THEY'LL BE AWAY BY NOW!

PHEW! THEY SURE WRECKED THE JOINT! I'VE GOT TO GET AFTER THEM! THE RANGERS ARE DUE TO COLLECT THAT KILLER THIS MORNING!

BUCK RACES OUT AND LEAPS TO THE SADDLE ~~~
COME ON, SILVER! LET'S GO!

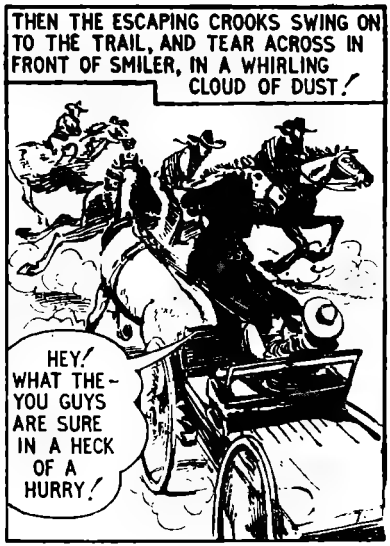
BUCK GALLOPS UP THE MAIN STREET AT BREAKNECK SPEED, IN AN ATTEMPT TO HEAD OFF THE ESCAPING CROOKS~
I'LL KEEP TO THE TRAIL! I CAN MOVE FASTER THAT WAY! THEY'RE BOUND TO SWING BACK ON TO IT, FARTHER AHEAD!

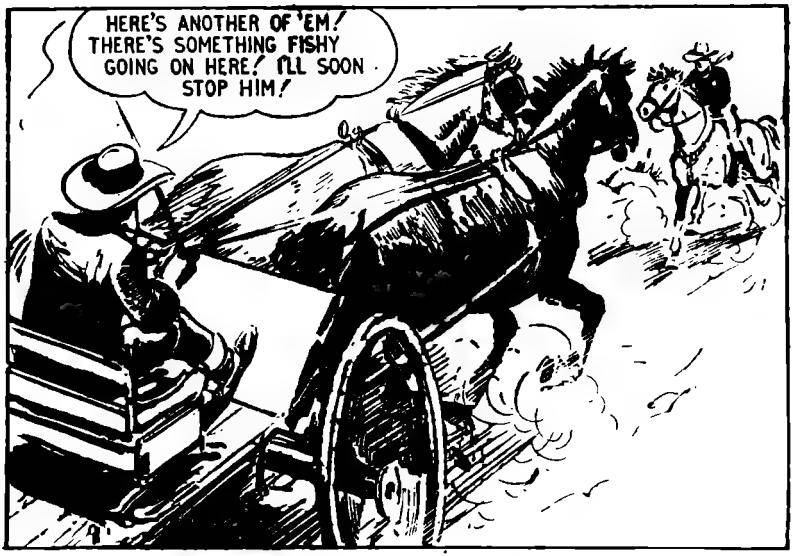
MEANWHILE, A NORTH-BOUND EXPRESS PULLS INTO ALKALI STATION, JUST OUTSIDE THE TOWN ~~~
ALKALI CITY! ALKALI CITY!
I GUESS THIS IS THE PLACE ~~

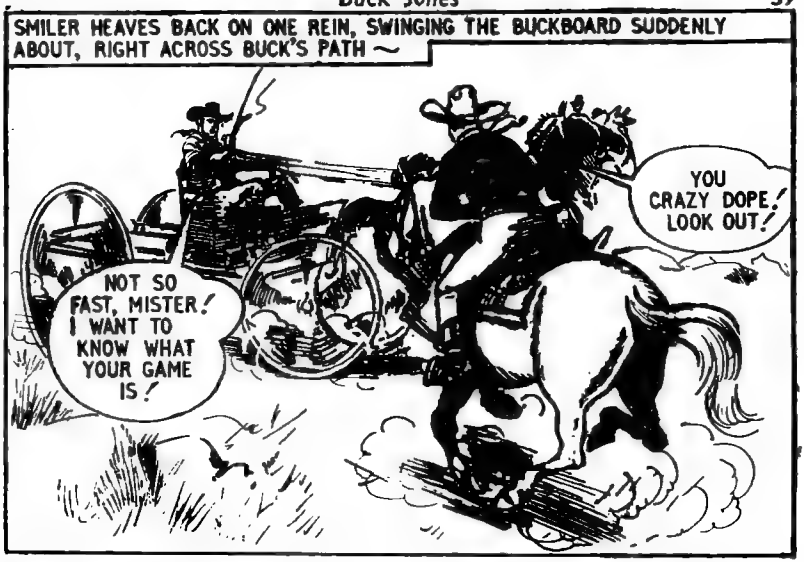
SAY, STATIONMASTER! I'M A RANGER OFFICER. I GUESS I'M EXPECTED ~~
SURE THING! THERE'S A BUCKBOARD WAITING OUTSIDE, SON. I WAS TOLD TO PUT IT AT YOUR DISPOSAL ~~

THE TOWN'S STRAIGHT AHEAD DOWN THE TRAIL! YOU CAN'T MISS IT ~~
OKAY! THANKS A LOT!

SURE IS A BIG RESPONSIBILITY, BRINGING IN A KILLER LIKE TEX SNYDER--I'LL HAVE TO KEEP ON MY TOES ALL THE TIME!


THEN THE ESCAPING CROOKS SWING ON TO THE TRAIL, AND TEAR ACROSS IN FRONT OF SMILER, IN A WHIRLING CLOUD OF DUST!
HEY! WHAT THE- YOU GUYS ARE SURE IN A HECK OF A HURRY!


HERE'S ANOTHER OF 'EM! THERE'S SOMETHING FISHY GOING ON HERE! I'LL SOON STOP HIM!


SMILER HEAVES BACK ON ONE REIN, SWINGING THE BUCKBOARD SUDDENLY ABOUT, RIGHT ACROSS BUCK'S PATH ~
NOT SO FAST, MISTER! I WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOUR GAME IS!
YOU CRAZY DOPE! LOOK OUT!

BUCK MAKES A LAST MINUTE EFFORT TO CLEAR THE OBSTACLE, BUT SILVER JUST FAILS, AND THEY CRASH TO THE GROUND ~
LET'S GET A GOOD LOOK AT YOU!
YOU LUNATIC! WHAT THE HECK D'YOU THINK YOU'RE UP TO?

GEE, I'M SORRY, SHERIFF! I WAS ONLY TRYING TO HELP! THOUGHT YOU WERE SOME NO-GOOD MAKING A GETAWAY!
OH! THE RANGER OFFICER!

YOU MUST BE PRETTY GREEN, BUT NEVER DO THAT AGAIN, SON ~~ I'M BUCK JONES!
GEE, I'M GLAD TO MEET YOU, BUCK. I'VE SURE HEARD A LOT ABOUT YOU! MY NAME'S SMILER SHAW!

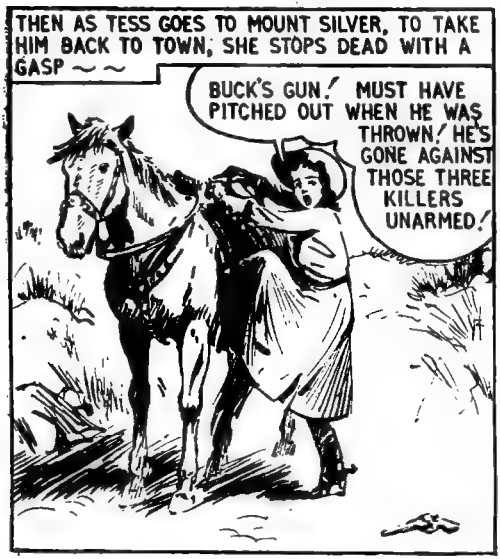
I HOPE SILVER'S NOT HURT ~~ I COULD KICK MYSELF!
HE'S NOT HURT BAD, BUT I GUESS HE'S PULLED A MUSCLE SLIGHTLY. HE'S NOT FIT TO OVERTAKE THOSE CROOKS NOW!

AND IN CASE YOU DON'T KNOW, THAT WAS YOUR MAN THAT JUST STREAKED PAST! TEX SNYDER'S ESCAPED!
TEX SNYDER ESCAPED!

SMILER'S FACE DROPS WITH DISMAY~
AW HECK~ THAT MEANS I'LL HAVE TO GO BACK TO EL PASO EMPTY-HANDED! IT WAS MY FIRST BIG ASSIGNMENT, TOO ~~~
NOT YOUR FAULT, SON!

THEN TESS ANDREWS REINS IN ALONGSIDE ~
ARE YOU HURT, BUCK? I SAW YOU TUMBLE. IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO?
YOU BET! LEND ME THAT HORSE, TESS! SILVER'S A BIT SHAKEN, AND I WANT TO GET AFTER THOSE CROOKS!

AS BUCK TEARS AWAY SMILER SWINGS THE BUCKBOARD ABOUT AND MAKES FOR THE STATION WITH A SIGH ~
THIS IS SURE NOT MY LUCKY DAY ~ ~~ OH WELL ~~
I GUESS YOU MUST BE MIGHTY DISAPPOINTED, PAL. BUT KEEP SMILING! YOU'LL GET YOUR CHANCE AGAIN!


THEN AS TESS GOES TO MOUNT SILVER, TO TAKE HIM BACK TO TOWN, SHE STOPS DEAD WITH A GASP ~ ~
BUCK'S GUN! MUST HAVE PITCHED OUT WHEN HE WAS THROWN! HE'S GONE AGAINST THOSE THREE KILLERS UNARMED!

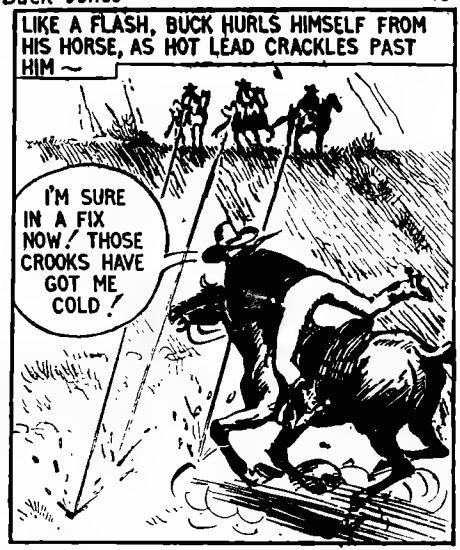
SNATCHING UP THE GUN, TESS SWINGS ABOUT AND GALLOPS AFTER BUCK ~
COME ON, SILVER! HURT OR NOT, YOU'VE GOT TO MOVE FAST, BOY, OR BUCK'S A GONER!

MEANWHILE, BUCK IS RAPIDLY OVERTAKING THE ESCAPING CROOKS ~ ~

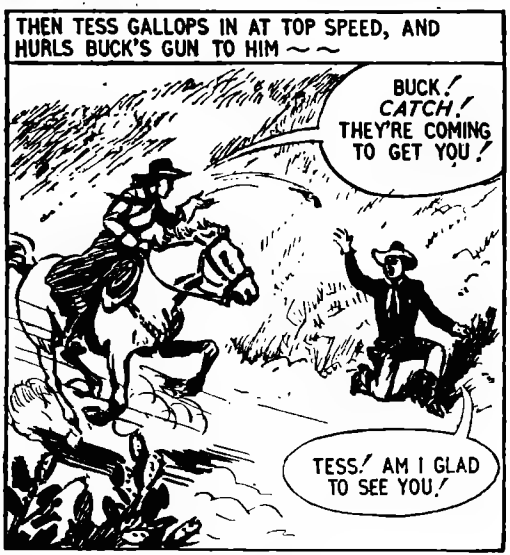
THERE THEY GO! HEADING UP THE RAILROAD EMBANKMENT!

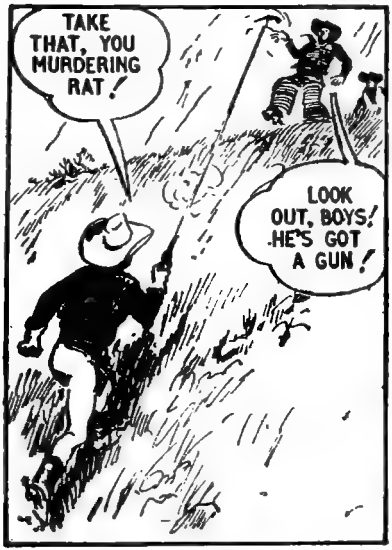
BUCK GALLOPS TO THE FOOT OF THE EMBANKMENT, GRABBING FOR HIS GUN.

HECK! MY GUN! IT'S GONE!


LIKE A FLASH, BUCK HURLS HIMSELF FROM HIS HORSE, AS HOT LEAD CRACKLES PAST HIM ~
I'M SURE IN A FIX NOW! THOSE CROOKS HAVE GOT ME COLD!

HE'S GOT NO GUN, BOYS! WE'VE GOT HIM WHERE WE WANT HIM! COME ON! WE'LL FILL HIM FULL OF LEAD!


THEN TESS GALLOPS IN AT TOP SPEED, AND HURLS BUCK'S GUN TO HIM ~~
BUCK! CATCH! THEY'RE COMING TO GET YOU!
TESS! AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU!


TAKE THAT, YOU MURDERING RAT!
LOOK OUT, BOYS! HE'S GOT A GUN!

HERE HE COMES! LET'S GO, BOYS! THROUGH THE RAILROAD TUNNEL!

BUCK RACES UP THE STEEP BANK, FOLLOWED BY TESS ~~~
AFTER THEM, BUCK!
TOO LATE, TESS! THE YELLOW RIVER IS AT THE END OF THAT TUNNEL ~~ AND IT'S THE STATE LINE! ONCE THEY CROSS IT, I CAN'T FOLLOW THEM ~~

THEN ROARING UP THE TRACKS COMES THE TEXAS FLYER!

JUST A SECOND! WE'RE NOT BEATEN YET! IT'S A CHANCE IN A MILLION, BUT I'VE GOT TO TAKE IT!

BUCK RACES ALONGSIDE THE THUNDERING TRAIN, AND MAKES A MIGHTY LEAP ~

WHOOPS! HERE I GO!

MEANWHILE, THE CROOKS GALLOP OUT AT THE FAR END OF THE TUNNEL ~

THE YELLOW RIVER! ONCE WE'RE ACROSS WE'RE SAFE!

OFF THE BRIDGE, TEX! DOWN THE BANK! THE FLYER'S COMING UP BEHIND!

AS BUCK LEAPS OUT INTO SPACE, THE ENGINEER YELLS AND SLAMS ON HIS BRAKES ~~~

THE TRAIN SCREECHES TO A STANDSTILL, AS BUCK LANDS ON TOP OF THE TEXAS KILLER~
GOT YOU, YOU SKUNK!
WHY, YOU~ HELP! GET HIM OFF ME, BOYS!

MEANWHILE, SMILER HAS LEAPT DOWN FROM HIS COACH~
WHAT THE HECK'S GOING ON DOWN THERE? WHY, IT'S BUCK JONES! AND HE'S CAUGHT SKUNK SNYDER! HERE I COME!

LEAVE HIM TO ME, TEX!
FRED! QUICK! PLUG HIM NOW!

THEN SMILER HURTLES IN LIKE A SHOT FROM A GUN ~
SMILER! ATTABOY, KID! GRAB HIM! I'LL SETTLE WITH THE OTHER TWO!
I'VE GOT HIM BUCK!

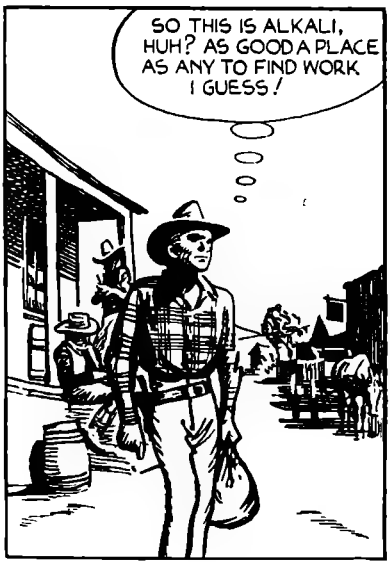
OFF THERE, YOU MURDERING RAT!
WHY YOU ~

THEN WITH A TERRIFIC UPPERCUT, BUCK SENDS TEX CRASHING BACK INTO SMOKEY ~
I GUESS THAT'LL SETTLE YOUR HASH!
LOOK OUT, YOU FOOL ~ AAAAGH!

UP TO THE TRAIN, MISTER, AND NO TRICKS!
COME ON OUT, YOU SKUNKS! YOU'RE GOING FOR A NICE RAILROAD RIDE!

BUCK JONES and the STRANGER

THERE'S A BOARD OUTSIDE ALKALI CITY THAT SAYS "WELCOME" ~ BUT IT'S A MIGHTY QUEER WELCOME THAT YOUNG OUT-OF-WORK, CLIFF KENYON RECEIVES



TWO GUNS SUDDENLY BLAZE OUT FROM THE SHADOWS AND THE BANKER COLLAPSES
U-U-UGH!
WHAT....?

AS THE GUNMEN RUN, CLIFF SNAPS INTO ACTION ~~

AT THAT MOMENT JANE GARRETT APPEARS...
EASY ON, MA'AM. HERE, GIVE ME SOME HELP WITH~
HELP!

HE DID IT ~ I SAW HIM WITH A SMOKING GUN!
YEAH, I HEARD 'EM QUARRELING, --- DOGGONE, IT'S HONEST JIM MULLIGAN, THE BANKER!

A CROWD SOON COLLECTS, AND TEMPERS ARE HIGH OVER THE KILLING OF SUCH A RESPECTED MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE TO PULL HIS GUN!

POOR OLD HONEST JIM, LET'S STRING THIS GUY UP!

YEAH, WHAT THIS GUY NEEDS IS A NECK-TIE PARTY!

LISTEN YOU CRAZY IDIOTS ~ I DIDN'T KILL HIM ~~ I ~

SUDDENLY ANOTHER VOICE SPEAKS ABOVE THE HUBBUB~~~ THE VOICE OF THE SHERIFF, BUCK JONES.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? HAVE YOU ALL GONE CRAZY?

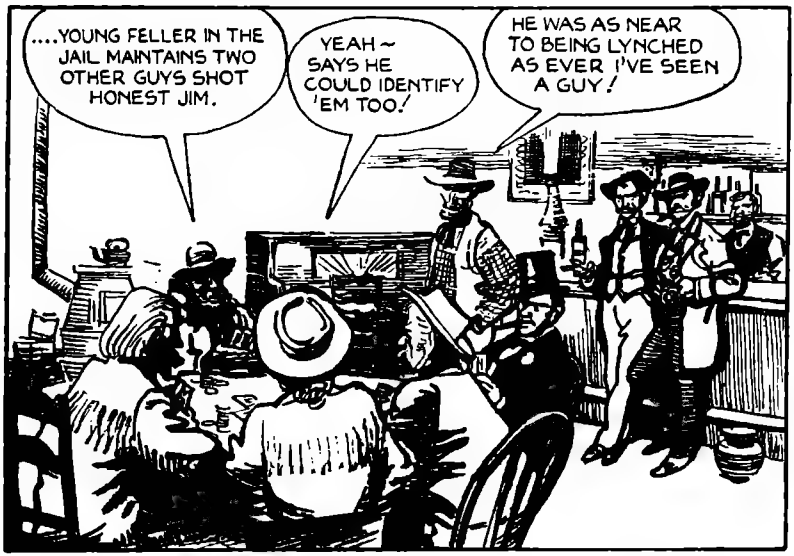
DOGGONE, BUCK~ KINDA LOST OUR HEADS!

YEAH, SHERIFF. RECKON I'M PLUMB SORRY.

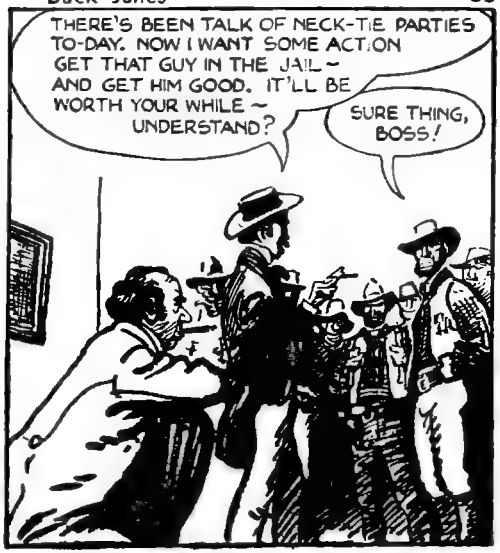
RECKON YOU AN' ME ARE GONNA HAVE A LITTLE CHAT. THE REST OF YOU GO ON HOME!

BUCK HEARS THE ACCOUNT OF THE SHOOTING, BUT ON THE EVIDENCE OF JANE GARRETT HAS TO ARREST CLIFF KENYON.
I'M INNOCENT, SHERIFF. HECK! I DIDN'T KILL HIM!
MAYBE ~ MAYBE NOT. BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO STAND TRIAL KID.

MEANWHILE, AT THE MIDAS GAMBLING SALOON FURTHER DOWN MAIN STREET, NAT AND LIONEL WOLFE, THE OWNERS, ARE IN CONFERENCE.
PITY THAT STRANGER HAPPENED ALONG JUST THEN! D'YOU THINK HE GOT A GOOD LOOK AT US?
DON'T RIGHTLY KNOW. LET'S GET DOWNSTAIRS ~ AND KEEP YOUR EARS OPEN!


....YOUNG FELLER IN THE JAIL MAINTAINS TWO OTHER GUYS SHOT HONEST JIM.
YEAH ~ SAYS HE COULD IDENTIFY 'EM TOO!
HE WAS AS NEAR TO BEING LYNCHED AS EVER I'VE SEEN A GUY!

GET THE BOYS, PRONTO ~ I'VE GOT AN IDEA TO GET RID OF THIS AWKWARD STRANGER

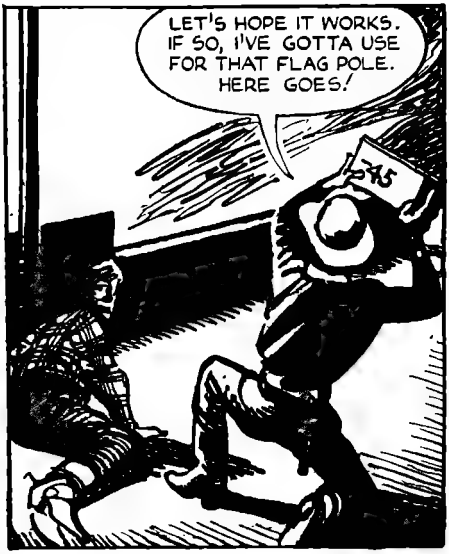

THERE'S BEEN TALK OF NECK-TIE PARTIES TO-DAY. NOW I WANT SOME ACTION GET THAT GUY IN THE JAIL ~ AND GET HIM GOOD. IT'LL BE WORTH YOUR WHILE ~ UNDERSTAND?
SURE THING, BOSS!

LATER THAT NIGHT.
BRING HIM OUT, SHERIFF. WE KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH GUNMEN!
YEAH, BRING HIM OUT, OR WE'LL COME IN AND GET HIM!
SHERIFF'S OFFICE

NO ONE TAKES MY PRISONER ~ AND THE FIRST MAN WHO TRIES TASTES LEAD!

NONE OF THEM SEEM TOO KEEN TO STEP FORWARD
BUT THE GANG HAVE NO INTENTION OF TASTING LEAD. INSTEAD..
THEY FIRE THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE!
GRAB A GUN AND SOME AMMO ~ AND LET'S BEAT IT UP TO THE ROOF.
-45

THOSE TWO MEN DOWN THERE ~
KEEP QUIET! IT'LL BE CURTAINS FOR US, IF THEY SPOT US!
-45


LET'S HOPE IT WORKS. IF SO, I'VE GOTTA USE FOR THAT FLAG POLE. HERE GOES!
-45

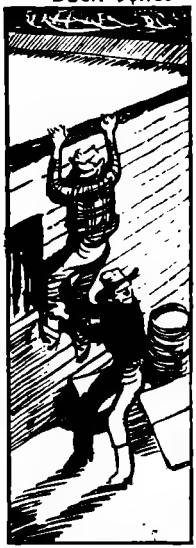
WHAT THE HECK'S THAT?

THAT'S TAKEN THEIR ATTENTION FOR A MINUTE. NOW WE'VE GOTTA MOVE FAST!

GET ACROSS AS FAST AS YOU CAN!
WHATEVER YOU SAY, SHERIFF.

CLIFF KENYON SUCCEEDS IN MAKING THE PERILOUS JOURNEY & BUCK FOLLOWS
HURRY, SHERIFF! FOR PETE'S SAKE -- HURRY!

HAVE THEY SPOTTED? US?
NO, I DON'T THINK SO, WE'LL DROP DOWN THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS SHACK



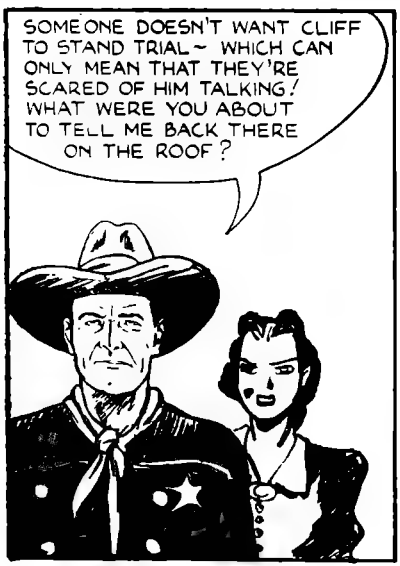
BUCK AND HIS PRISONER REACH THE GROUND SAFELY AND TAKE TO THEIR HEELS.
HOLD HARD, SHERIFF~~ I'VE GOTTA GET MY BREATH!
O.K. KID ~ AN' YOU'D BETTER LET ME HAVE THAT GUN BACK, TOO.

BUCK WONDERS WHAT THE STRANGER WILL DO. WILL THE KID MAKE A BREAK FOR IT?
BUT WITHOUT HESITATION ~
HERE YOU ARE, SHERIFF.
KEEP IT FRIEND ~ YOU'RE NOT A GUNMAN ~ NOT BY A MILE YOU'RE NOT!

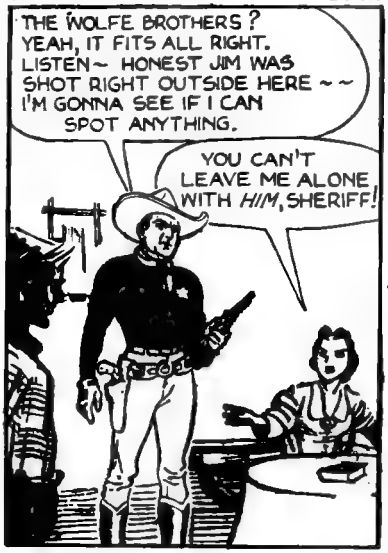
HECK! THE MOB'S HEADED THIS WAY! QUICK! IN HERE!
THEY DO NOT KNOW IT IS JANE GARRETT'S HOUSE!

INSIDE ~ ~
OH!

THEY'VE GONE BY.
SORRY I HAD TO DO THAT, MA'AM, BUT RELAX. WE DON'T AIM TO HURT YOU.
WELL, WHAT DO YOU WANT?


SOMEONE DOESN'T WANT CLIFF TO STAND TRIAL ~ WHICH CAN ONLY MEAN THAT THEY'RE SCARED OF HIM TALKING! WHAT WERE YOU ABOUT TO TELL ME BACK THERE ON THE ROOF?

THOSE TWO GUYS WHO LED THE MOB WERE THE TWO GUYS WHO SHOT THE BANKER ~ I'D KNOW 'EM ANYWHERE.


THE WOLFE BROTHERS? YEAH, IT FITS ALL RIGHT. LISTEN~ HONEST JIM WAS SHOT RIGHT OUTSIDE HERE ~~ I'M GONNA SEE IF I CAN SPOT ANYTHING.
YOU CAN'T LEAVE ME ALONE WITH HIM, SHERIFF!

HERE ~ TAKE THIS IF YOU'RE SCARED OF THIS GUY.
I CAN ASSURE YOU, MA'AM ~ I'M REAL HARMLESS.

BUCK STUDIES THE GROUND INTENTLY, AND SUDDENLY ~
WHAT THE HECK'S THIS?

CLIFF'S BULLET MUST'VE CLIPPED THIS HEEL OFF. RECKON I'LL CHECK THE BOOTS ROUND AT THE MIDAS GAMBLING JOINT ~~ PRONTO!

THEY'LL BE DOWNSTAIRS AT THIS TIME, SO HERE GOES!

BUCK HURRIEDLY SHINS UP TO THE WINDOW AND ENTERS THE WOLFE BROTHERS' LIVING QUARTERS.

THAT HEEL WAS SHOT FROM THIS BOOT ALL RIGHT! LOOKS LIKE I'VE FOUND THE GUY I WANT.

SUDDENLY, THE WOLFE BROTHERS ENTER THE ROOM ~
YOU'RE JUST THE GUYS I'M LOOKING FOR ~~ I'M GONNA RUN YOU IN FOR THE SHOOTING THIS AFTERNOON
AND YOU WITHOUT A GUN? NIX, SHERIFF ~ YOU AIN'T GONNA RUN ANYWHERE ~ THIS IS WHERE YOU GET YOURS!

BUCK'S AIM IS TRUE, AND THE LAMP IS SHATTERED. NAT WOLFE'S GUN SPITS VICIOUSLY~~

GO AND GET ANOTHER LIGHT. HE CAN ONLY GET OUT BY THE WINDOW~ AND HE'LL BE A PERFECT TARGET IF HE TRIES!
O.K. BROTHER.

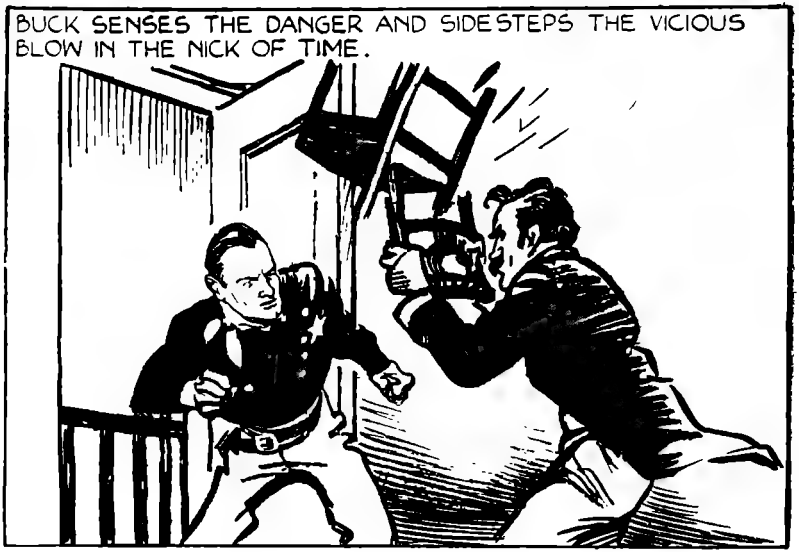
HE'S GONE! HOW THE HECK DID HE MANAGE THAT?

DOGGONE! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! HE COULDN'T HAVE GOT OUT!

BOTH OUT COLD!

I'LL GET A COUPLE OF THE BOYS FROM DOWNSTAIRS TO GUARD THESE RATS.

BUT BUCK IS MISTAKEN! NAT WOLFE IS NOT OUT COLD!


BUCK SENSES THE DANGER AND SIDESTEPS THE VICIOUS BLOW IN THE NICK OF TIME.

THAT'LL DEFINITELY HOLD YOU FOR A WHILE

JUD BAKER! CHIPS PATERSON! C'MON UP HERE AND STAND GUARD THE REST OF YOU GO HOME ~ THIS JOINT'S CLOSED FROM NOW ON.
WE'RE A-COMIN', BUCK

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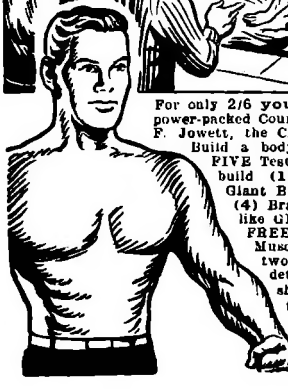
He was "SHRIMP" to the boys at the baths!



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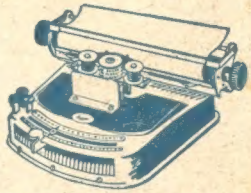

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